**Minutes for Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) Meeting for Planning**

**Held on Zoom 1st July, 2021**

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| **Present (Councilllor and PPN members)** | * **Cllr. T. Phelan (Chair)**
* **Cllr. L. Brazil**
* **Cllr. T. Cronin**
* **Cllr D. Daniels**
* **Cllr. F. Quinlan**
* **Cllr. S. Power**
* **Cllr. E. Quinlan**
* **Cllr. J. Tobin**
 | * **Donal Lehane**
* **John Galloway**
* **Niall Harrington**
* **Sean Carey**
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| **Present (WCCC Officials)** | * **M. Quinn**
* **L. McGree**
* **R. Ryall**
* **M. Linehan**
 | * **D. Quinn**
* **L. Mullally**
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| Apologies | * **Mary O’Halloran**
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| **Item No.** | **Decisions Taken** | **Responsibility/Action/When?** |
| 1.M1.Approval of Minutes | * Minutes of Meeting 23rd March 2021 were proposed by Cllr D. Daniels, seconded by Cllr. J. Tobin and agreed.
 | Adopted minutes to be published on website.  |
| 2.Matters arising and updates | * Cllr. J. Tobin asked to be added to the attendance register of the meeting of 23rd March 2021 as he was omitted from same.
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| 3. Housing Strategy Presentation | * Niall Byrne from Deloitte gave a presentation on the Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment for the Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028.
* Following the presentation questions were raised by Cllr. Tobin, Cllr. Daniels, Cllr. Brazil in relation to the increasing demand for 1 and 2 bed houses and the projected price increase for all houses. The demand for housing due to the population growth and the demand from single people was discussed. Cllr. Daniels and Cllr. Brazil questioned were the projected figures correct.
* Niall Harrington stated the when comparing prices of houses, newly built houses are now 15% bigger and more energy efficient and that you cannot compare the 2nd hand market with new build housing market as per the report. He also commented that the rental charges for private rented properties are not correct, and that Draft may not be the most accurate source for assessment.
* Cllr. Quinlan commented that a large proportion of the population of Waterford can’t afford to purchase a house and are over the limits for Social Housing. This has major impacts for the ‘working poor’. He questioned if the HDNA took into account state interventions in the housing market.
* Niall Byrne replied that the population figures are in line with the guidelines and the property price growth has considered income access across the county, re: rental market a modest 4% growth was used.
* Cllr. Quinlan acknowledged the figures were provided by guidelines but were they accurate and do they reflect market conditions in Co. Waterford?
* Niall Byrne replied CBI rules will determine housing supports needed.
* Cllr. Cronin asked why there are very little private developments in Dungarvan highlighting high levels of leakage to Abbeyside. He questioned if there were enough lands zoned in Dungarvan? He asked how this can be addressed.
* Liam McGree replied there is sufficient zoned land but land ownership (release of lands) and supply of services (water/wastewater) lead to challenges. He mentioned that the Council need to lead and not react on this issue.
* Cllr. Phelan asked what the practical implications of the HDNA are from a planning point of view.
* Liam McGree replied from a planning point of view we need to ensure that we have sufficient land zoned and serviced. The HDNA identifies the need and location for housing and we need to ensure we meet that need working in collaboration with Housing Department, Approved Housing Bodies and other agencies. LMcG thanked Deloitte and Niall Byrne for the report and the presentation.
 | Liam –access to the report will be made available  |
| 4. Overview of Draft City and County Development Plan | * Liam McGree gave an overview of the Draft Development Plan, and the overall process that has got us to this stage. The Draft Plan is currently out for public consultation, 6 Webinars will be held at the end of July with presentations to the public. He also outlined how people can interact with the Draft Plan on the online portal. ([www.consult.waterfordcouncil.ie](http://www.consult.waterfordcouncil.ie)) was also provided.
* Cllr. Tobin – Cllrs. Have discussed the Development Plan at length and question whether and a simple majority of the Council will change any part of the Development Plan including zoned land and protected structures.
* Cllr. Daniels asked has a decision been made re: the inclusion of protected structures.
* Cllr. Phelan questioned the process in relation to adopting RPS.
* Rose Ryall spoke about the process relating to the additions to the record of protected structures and advised that notices have issued in accordance with the guidelines. The conservation officer has made her contact details available to the public and is happy to engage in any way possible.
* Niall Harrington gave his apologies as he had to leave for another meeting but he noted that the HDNA/Retail Strategy needed ‘local input’ as was the case with the report ‘Find your Future’. He said that Rikon should be employed to census/fact check the reports.
* Donal Lehane questioned if Irish Water supply is included/consulted in the Dev Plan or an external process, and if the Council have a relationship with Irish Water? Can feedback of meetings with Irish Water be put on the agenda and relayed back to the SPC.
* Cllr. Brazil supported this question, Cllr. Cronin noted that many settlements have inadequate water or waste water supply and stated that we will need to have a serious talk with Irish Water. He stated that we do not have enough land zoned for development.
* Liam McGree clarified that a simple majority will adopt or change any part of the Plan that the members as the members as long as this is in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development. He also acknowledged there are infrastructural deficiencies and IW have a mandate to invest in services, the Development Plan will be used to focus on areas for investment. Liam McGree and Rose Ryall stated that the list of protected structures forms part of the overall Development Plan and would be adopted in its entirety rather that in isolation of on an individual basis. Homeowners can send in submissions and the Conversation Officer will take these into consideration.
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| 5. Section 254 licences | * Liam McGree stated that the vast majority of applications in 2021 have been granted. He noted that he is aware of the challenges that business in the service industry are facing and businesses have been facilitated with the freeing up of space and widening footpaths where possible to provide outdoor seating areas. He further noted that the Planning Authority needs to have regards to neighboring residential amenity, trip hazards, loading bays etc. when granting S.254 Licenses.
* Cllr. Phelan acknowledged its success and questioned if there is a policy and is there consistency in approvals, are enforcement conditions being abided by.
* Cllr. Tobin asked if the Section 254 licence covers outdoor drinking and if the Gardai have been consulted with regards to outdoor drinking.
* Michael Quinn replied consistency and planning guidelines have to be adhered to, enforcement action will be taken where necessary but we will engage with operators first. A common sense approach is being adopted. Section 254 licence does not cover outdoor drinking the Gardai will use their discretion, no particular issues last year.
* Cllr. Phelan asked are fixed outdoor dining furniture in line with planning guidelines, will the season be extended to October and will open spaces be reverted to parking spaces. Michael Quinn replied that these issues will be dealt with on a case by case basis depending on demand and location.
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| 6. AOB | * Cllr. Brazil raised the issue of the difference in development levies throughout the Country with Waterford C.C.C charging the highest fee.
* Michael Quinn replied the Development Levy Charge is a scheme that is adopted by the Council and agreed to discuss this matter at a future SPC meeting. A new Development Contribution Scheme should come in tandem with the adoption of the County Development Plan next year.
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